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C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 002371

SIPDIS

VIENNA ALSO FOR BOSNIA; USVIENNA ALSO FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 12356: DECL OADR

TAGS: PHUM PREF HR BK

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RAISES WAR CRIMES, REFUGEE
PROBLEMS WITH CROATIAN PRESIDENT, DEFMIN

REF: ZAGREB 2348

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1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. DURING A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT TUDJMAN, DEFMIN
SUSAK, AND DEPUTY FM SANADER, ON OTHER SUBJECTS
(SEPTEL), AMB. GALBRAITH MADE TWO OTHER POINTS:

CRIMINAL ACTS OF CROATIAN OCCUPYING TROOPS

3. AMB. GALBRAITH SAID THAT THE DESECRATION OF GRAVES
HE HAD WITNESSED IN KASIC (REFTEL), EVIDENTLY COMMITTED
BY CROATIAN TROOPS WHO OCCUPIED THE VILLAGE FOR 14
MONTHS, WAS HORRENDOUS AND UNACCEPTABLE. BOTH CROATIAN
OFFICIALS SOUGHT TO DENY CROATIAN RESPONSIBILITY, THEN
TO ARGUE THAT SERBS HAD DONE MUCH WORSE THINGS AND ON A
LARGER SCALE, TO CROATS. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT
THIS SORT OF DEFENSE WAS LIKE COMPARING THE ACTIONS OF
A LEGITIMATE POLICE FORCE TO THE MAFIA; AS A WESTERN
DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, CROATIA MUST EXPECT TO BE HELD TO A
HIGH STANDARD. MOREOVER, SUCH ACTIONS, AS A PRACTICAL
MATTER, CREATED ILL WILL THAT WOULD MAKE REINTEGRATION
MORE DIFFICULT WHEN THE TIME CAME. GALBRAITH SUGGESTED
THAT SUSAK CONSIDER GIVING SPECIAL TRAINING TO CROATIAN
TROOPS TO SENSITIZE THEM ON THESE ISSUES.

HANDLING OF REFUGEES

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4. AMB. GALBRAITH ALSO INQUIRED ABOUT REPORTS THAT
SOME 450 REFUGEES FROM THE BANJA LUKA AREA OF BOSNIA-
HERZEGOVINA HAD BEEN HELD AT THE CONFRONTATION LINE (IN
UNPA SECTOR WEST), REFUSED CROATIAN PERMISSION TO
ENTER. NONE OF THE CROATIAN OFFICIALS PRESENT WAS
FAMILIAR WITH THE CASE. PRES. TUDJMAN MADE A PHONE
CALL AND REPORTED THAT THOSE REFUGEES FROM THE GROUP
WHO HAD MEDICAL PROBLEMS HAD BEEN ADMITTED IMMEDIATELY.
THE OTHERS WERE BEING HELD TEMPORARILY, PENDING FINDING
PLACES FOR THEM TO GO. THIS WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE
CONTINUING HEAVY FLOW OF REFUGEES HAD STRAINED
CROATIA'S CAPACITY TO ABSORB THEM. NEVERTHELESS,
TUDJMAN ASSURED THE AMBASSADOR THE CROATIAN GOVERNMENT
HAD NO INTENTION OF NOT ADMITTING THESE PEOPLE. "HELP
US END THIS WAR," HE SAID, SO THAT SUCH PROBLEMS WOULD
NOT OCCUR.

GALBRAITH

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